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ABSTRACT

Two position papers on graduate programs in adult education are presented. The first clarifies alternative positions which the Ontario Institute faced and illustrates the differences by means of charts. An explanation is given for the choice of a pluralistic rather than a singularistic alternative. The second paper lists alternative starting points for organizing a graduate program of adult education. The purpose is to sharpen thinking about starting points, develop clearer rationales for graduate programs, and articulate to students frameworks for thinking about the field. No attempt is made to suggest consequences of each system or conclude which is best. (Author/NF)

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ALTERNATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS[1]

The gray philosopher thinking, walked alone
in the garden. He saw a lily-of-the-valley.
Yesterday it had two leaves;
Today it had three.
He frowned:
"You are inconsistent," he said.
And he crushed the flower with his foot.

--Clif Bennett[2]

I sometimes feel that I am that gray philosopher. I sometimes wish I didn't have to walk in the midst of inconsistency or difference. Unlike the g.p. above, I like seeing growth of 2-leaf plants into 3-leafers; what troubles me is finding radishes in my rose garden.

I'm convinced I'm not alone. I'd guess that nearly every professor of adult education shares my dilemma at some time--when he first meets his students, and especially when he expands from a one-man department to a larger one.

The problem is one of choosing--and living with--the philosophical position which will undergird every action we take and every goal we have in our departments. For we are not gray philosophers walking through someone else's garden; we are the gardeners who plan and design and nourish the garden.

What kinds of gardens can we plant?

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[1]Virginia R. Griffin, Department of Adult Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario. August, 1971.

[2]Clif Bennett. Bronze Man Breathing, privately published, 1967.

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In our discussions and debates in our own department, we first were asking the question of whether we wanted a rose garden or a radish bed. Those of us who were roses wanted to have a rose garden. The radishes, understandably, preferred a radish bed. Obviously, this debate got us nowhere.

We then realized that the more basic question was whether we wanted to be a one-genus unity (whether roses or radishes), or a multi-genus garden harboring roses, radishes, zinnias, and even a few thistles.

We indeed were a multi-genus garden. We had thought we had "just growed that way." The new insight came that roses, radishes, and thistles could be planted by design and intent because a garden is richer with such diversity.

The Alternatives Clarified

We thus found we had three alternatives--two which are singularistic philosophies at opposite ends of a continuum (roses or radishes), and one which is a pluralistic philosophy (roses and radishes and thistles by design).

Every department of adult education regardless of its size has these same choices. To reach a decision, we need to compare them on a set of common dimensions. The dimensions which we used are these:

1. The predominant value
2. Kinds of learning thought to be of most value
3. Concept of graduate study
4. Justification for existence of Department of Adult Education
5. Belief re. ability of students to identify own learning goals
6. Belief re. ability of students to plan own learning activities
7. Belief re. ability of students to evaluate own learning

8. Conception of competencies most needed by graduates
9. Nature of curriculum
10. Basis for making curriculum decisions
11. Basis for selecting students
12. Optimum faculty-student ratio
13. Qualities required in faculty
14. Nature of general advising function
15. Methods of advising thesis students
16. Requirements, standards for graduation
17. Who evaluates
18. Basis for forming priorities (in general)

The matrix on the following pages illustrates the basic differences between these three positions, as I see them. (You may disagree with entries I have made in some cells; there are variations of each position that could be proposed. I invite your further clarification.)

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

Dimension	Singularistic		Pluralistic
	Position A	Position Z	
1. Predominant values	-the concepts, skills, of the discipline, as embodied in faculty and research within the discipline. -individual's mastery of the content and process of the discipline.	-the wisdom and potential within student community. -healthy functioning of the group may take precedence over the self individual. -self-direction in learning.	-freedom for staff and students in midst of alternatives.
2. Kind of learning thought to be of most value	-mastery of content and processes of the discipline. -at Ph.D. level, creation of new knowledge via research.	-creativity, openness. -enthusiasm and ability to continue life-long learning. -whatever the learner feels a need to learn.	-ability to discern, understand alternative value positions and their implications for practice. -learning how to learn, how to seek requisite data, and use resources for planning and learning. -values and strengths of pluralistic open society, functioning in one.
3. Concept of graduate study	-purpose is to prepare competent leaders (top practitioners and researchers) for the field. -competence comes through mastery of content of the discipline.	-purpose is to develop fullest personal potential, greatest possible curiosity, creativity, desire and ability to learn. -the practitioner needed most is an open, creative learner.	-graduate study is a period of experimentation with a variety of philosophical positions. -graduate study fulfills different purposes for different people.
4. Justification for existence of Department of Adult Education	-there is an identifiable field of practice which requires trained personnel. -there is a body of subject matter which practitioners should have mastered. - leaders in the field must have graduate degrees.	-learners who are adult educators will want to learn more about adult education. -learners require a specific "vehicle" for developing creativity, curiosity, etc. therefore, adult education material can be useful if gathered together.	-reasons given under the other positions, plus intent to make the field more visible, more legitimate, more influential in influencing all of education.

Dimension	Singularistic		Pluralistic
	Position A	Position Z	
5. Belief re. ability of students to identify own learning goals	Question irrelevant. System prescribes learning goals. Student is expected to master content of the discipline which he has not previously mastered.	Students are the only ones who can and should identify goals. To be via group assessment, and group or individual planning.	-each student should have opportunity to learn and observe his learning under systems in which he does and does not identify own learning goals and learning activities. -student expected to discover how he can plan most effectively.
6. Belief re. ability of students to plan own learning activities	Learning activities should be planned only by the faculty member who knows the area best. He may consult students on occasion.	Students have inherent ability to plan and carry out the most effective activities to meet their learning goals. May consult faculty on occasion.	-ultimate outcome is a graduate who is able to identify own goals and activities in whatever way is most effective for him.
7. Belief re. ability of students to evaluate own learning	Students not able to evaluate because not knowledgeable enough concerning standards or the totality of what there is to be learned.	Only the student--and his group--can evaluate his learning. Evaluation done in terms of his (their) goals.	-student can evaluate himself; he should, however, experience all forms of evaluation (by faculty, by peers, by self) to discover which is most useful to him.
8. Conception of competencies most needed by graduates	-doers of research highest prestige and greatest need. -understanding and manipulation of basic concepts, theories, models, principles.	-ability to continue to learn to adapt to changing society, to be creative in problem solving.	-variety of conceptions present and openly communicated. Each person carries out his work in light of conception he accepts or develops.
9. Nature of the curriculum	-core sources, some elective courses. -supervised field work for those without experience.	-teaching-learning teams. -problem-solving seminars. -integrative seminars. -field experience not supervised. -self-directed inquiry.	-one or two required courses. -many elective courses offered by faculty. -seminars organized by students. -individual study.
10. Basis for making curriculum decisions	-structure and content of the discipline, needs of the field as perceived by faculty. -long term planning of curriculum is possible and desirable.	-personal and professional needs of students as they perceive them, using some data provided by faculty. -curriculum is designed on year-to year basis by each group of students.	-req. course: giving structure of discipline, awareness of needs in the field. -faculty offer courses they wish. -students organize activities they feel they need.

Dimension	Singularistic		Pluralistic
	Position A	Position Z	
11. Basis for selecting students	-operative philosophy screens out inappropriate people. -high intelligence Ph.D. candidates highest priority. -M.A.'s next; no M.Ed.'s.	-operative phil. screens out inappropriate people. -those who have potential for creative innovation in prac.	-operative phil. screens out inappropriate people. -those who have demonstrated most potential for making any one of a variety of contributions to field.
12. Faculty-student ratio	-1:10 or fewer full time	-1:35, 40 full time equiv. -(critical mass of students necessary)	-1:15, 20 full time equiv. -(critical mass students and faculty necessary)
13. Qualities required in faculty	-subject matter competence within core area of discip. -didactic teaching competence. -research orientation and competence.	-acceptance of this philosophy -high degree of maturity, autonomy, interdependence. -ability to serve as resource person within area of inter. -skill in group process.	-ability and willingness to manage ambiguity and diversity. -ability to deal with colleagues with opposing assumptions -autonomy, consistent with own phil. -competence in some area.
14. Nature of general advising function	Purpose: decisions regarding courses and schedule. Clarify and implement career goals. Medium: one-to-one consultation of faculty (assigned) and student.	Purpose: self-assessment and identification of learning goals and learning plan. Medium: small groups of peers, teaching-learning teams, student or group initiated consultation with selected faculty.	-purpose: understanding and dealing with alternatives and purposes of the pluralistic society. -medium: student may select faculty advisor and/or he can join small group of students, teaching-learning teams, or he may go it alone.
15. Methods of advising thesis students	-committee or chairman provide close and constant supervision. -methodology and stat. courses required. -proposal and pre-orals hearing required. -research seminars required to sharpen skills of students.	-traditional thesis optional. -other ways to achieve same skills will be designed. -seminars and informal groups of students will perform chief advising function. -faculty available for consultation.	-variety of methods available. -student in consultation with faculty of his choice, select which methods he will employ.

Dimension	Singularistic		Pluralistic
	Position A	Position Z	
16. Requirement, standards for graduation	-prelim's and research comp. exams prerequisite to Ph.D. candidacy. -final written exam and orals on thesis for both M.A. and Ph.D.	-accomplishment of individual's learning goals at a predetermined criterion level.	-accomp. of learning listed under dimension No. 2. -demonstrated mastery of required course. -accomp. of own learning goals at a predetermined criterion level.
17. Who evaluates	Faculty	Students (self and group)	-outside evaluator -instructors of required course, and -self and/or group
18. Basis for forming priorities	Basic values of this phil. position (consistency honored)	Basic values of this phil. position (consistency honored)	-each decision made after vigorous debate and after all sides have been heard from, on basis of this philosophy. -that which will provide greatest amount of freedom for all given resources available.

The Alternative We Chose

We chose this pluralistic alternative, partly because we believe in it, partly because it was easier than making the hard decision of one singularistic philosophy and weeding out those who disagreed with the choice.

It's hard for us to make decisions, our staff meetings are challenging and often discomforting. Sometimes we listen to each other, sometimes we get angry and shut each other out. We don't look like a coherent whole to students or our other publics; we look downright inconsistent. It's hard to explain us or interpret what we are about. We haven't found all the ways to capitalize on our differences--or to help our students learn fully from our differences. We have periods when the urge is to converge, press for commonness. Later, we'll diverge again. Our tolerance for ambiguity is sometimes stretched too thin. I sometimes feel that I want to crush flowers. Sometimes I can't decide if I am crushing flowers or bringing order out of chaos. In spite of all this, I still think we made the right decision for now. We may some day make a different decision.

Your Decision

What decision will you make in your department? The urge is strong to surround ourselves with people who agree with us. We rationalize that there are like-minded people who, in spite of their similarities to us, challenged us to grow and evolve. There is much to be said for focusing our energies on the external community, instead of working out internal differences. If you are a small department and growing, you have more

variable options than does a large department for whom a change in direction is a major upheaval. If there are many institutions serving the field, each is freer to represent a narrower specialization or philosophy.

On the other hand, internal diversity can provide an extremely yeasty and productive learning environment--if you truly value it--and if you are prepared to be open about your differences and let yourselves and your students learn from the process of operating your department. Just the other day, a student told me he had learned more of use to him working on committees than he had in classes.

Our experience urges me to press you to make a decision about your philosophy, and let it guide your actions. Don't just fall into a habitual and unthinking way of operating. The philosophy you espouse and the way you express it in how you plan courses, select students, evaluate, get the work of a department done, and all the rest, may well shape adult education of the future more than will the content of any course you teach.

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Thinking About a Graduate Program in Adult Education (No. 2)

ALTERNATIVE STARTING POINTS FOR ORGANIZING THE PROGRAM INTO COURSES[1]

Problem

At some point in giving birth to a graduate program in adult education, and at many points in revising an existing program, the planners have to decide what courses will be included in that program. We generally assert that courses should grow out of the objectives we have. But what terms do we use in our thinking about objectives? These decisions are closely linked with what we believe about education, about learning, and about the nature of adult education.

Too often, however, the planners of a program do not have or do not make explicit their rationale for the courses they offer, or the rationale they use is not visibly linked to the beliefs they have about adult education as a field. Too often, a graduate program is a repeat version of the one at the chairman's alma mater. Or it is an eclectic collection of courses that the existing or available faculty want to teach.

In a previous paper in this series,[2] I illustrated many of the practical curricular consequences of holding and acting upon different philosophical positions. The particular courses that woudl result from holding each of those positions were not identified in that paper, largely because there is not an easily discernible one-to-one relationship between those general philosophical positions and how one structures the content of the learning in a program. There are intervening variables.

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[1] Virginia R. Griffin, Department of Adult Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario, September 1971.

[2] "Thinking About a Graduate Program in Adult Education (No. 1): ALTERNATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS."

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I have not been able to abstract these intervening variables via a logical analysis. I have been able to think productively about the question, however, by identifying the possible starting points for organizing a graduate program into courses, and then teasing out what each starting point implies about the beliefs that would underlie each.

Purpose

This paper, then, is a listing of alternative starting points for organizing a graduate program of adult education into courses.[1,2] Each alternative is described briefly, the courses that would fit within each are illustrated, and the underlying assumptions are suggested. No attempt is made to suggest consequences of each system, and no conclusion is drawn about which is "best." My purpose is to help us all sharpen our thinking about our own starting points, develop clearer rationales for our graduate programs, and articulate more clearly and honestly to our students what our frameworks for thinking about the field are.[3]

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[1]This process is distinct from the organizing of courses into a curriculum. Within that area of concern there seem to be four main alternatives: (1) Students are required to take all courses offered, (2) Students must take core courses, supplemented by electives, (3) Students choose totally from electives, and (4) Students are guided, via assorted assessment programs, to take certain electives. The relative merits of these alternatives is a major concern in curriculum building, but is not discussed in this paper.

[2]Readers who are questioning the wisdom of offering "courses" should read on; the term "course" is used here for convenience and is intended in a general sense as in the framework for organizing a learning program.

[3]Traditional program planning models suggest that objectives be stated prior to selecting the curriculum elements and organizing principles. I suggest that even the wording of objectives grows out of some framework for thinking about the field. Clarification of starting points, such as those I've listed here, is prerequisite to thinking about and stating objectives.

As I look at existing graduate programs in adult education I see evidences of at least nineteen different starting points being used. Most are self-explanatory, so I have listed them in tabular form on the following pages. For those needing a fuller explanation, such as basic competencies or basic processes, a footnote is given at the end of the table.

TABLE 1 - Alternative Starting Points for Organizing Graduate Programs in Adult Education, with Associated Examples, Assumptions, and Potential for Learner Autonomy

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for Learner Autonomy[a]
1. APPRENTICESHIP TO A WISE MAN	No courses; observation, discussion, study, practice, questioning, reflecting	1. A one-to-one intensive relationship with an active, insightful practitioner/teacher is the most effective way to learn a profession. It incorporates desirable principles such as guided on-the-job practice, feedback, reflection. 2. More can be learned by watching a man work and working with him than can ever be found in all of his writings.	***
2. AUDIENCES	Women and adult education Labor adult education The Poor, The Disadvantaged The Illiterate	The needs, learning processes, and workable education approaches of various audience groups vary so significantly and critically that they must be studied separately.	*
3. BASIC COMPETENCIES	Communicating effectively Understanding conditions under which adults learn Being an effective group leader	1. There are certain skills, knowledge, attitudes, that all adult educators, regardless of the setting in which they work or the job they hold, must have in order to be effective and to be considered adult educators. 2. These competencies have been identified, can be learned and developed, and are appropriately learned and developed in a graduate program. 3. What an adult educator can do is more important than what he knows.	**

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for a Learner Autonomy
4. BASIC CONCEPTS	Basic concepts from Sociology for adult educators Basic concepts from Anthropology for adult educators Basic concepts unique to adult education	1. A field of knowledge is inherently structured via concepts (a single idea e.g. "participation"), principles (2 concepts in proper relationship to each other), and theories (a set of principles accompanied by an explanation of why they operate as they do). 2. Basic concepts in adult education, or related to it exist or can be identified. 3. The successful practitioner must know and understand these basic concepts. Graduate programs should help students master these concepts.	*
5. BASIC PROCESSES[c]	Gathering and using feedback Asking the productive question Assumption testing	1. Basic processes are so basic that they cut across all content areas, problems, audiences, etc. Once a student masters the basic processes, he can apply them in all situations throughout the rest of his life. 2. The effective adult educator is one who consciously operates the basic processes when each is appropriate. 3. The basic processes can be learned and practised within the context of adult education and using the "stuff"that makes up the field.	**

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for Learner Autonomy[a]
6. COMMON PRACTICE (TRADITION) (CONVENTIONAL WISDOM)	Overview of adult education Program Planning & evaluation Community development Small group process	1. The usual and traditional system of courses was carefully thought out by the pioneers in the field. It has stood the test of time. It has shaped the way people conceive of the field, and thus meets the expectations of our consuming publics.	**
7. COMPETENCIES/ INTERESTS OF FACULTY	Each person teaches whatever he wants to teach, his area of specialization/research	1. People can teach only those things they have specialized in and know best. They can teach them best if allowed to structure the course in the same way they conceptualize/ conceive the area. 2. The most stimulating program is a varied one in which a variety of approaches and philosophies are used, one in which a diverse group of people who are each excited about something different come together to interact "while doing their own thing." 3. Ph.D.'s in the field are so limited in number, we are well advised to take whoever we can find as faculty member, and then ask him to do what he can do best.	*

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for Learner Autonomy[a]
8. EVOLUTIONARY COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS	No courses; free-floating learning groups working on on-going, real, research, development, and teaching projects in the field	Some assumptions as for Apprenticeship, plus the following: 1. Intense interaction with peers and a variety of wise men with a variety of approaches, is richer and more desirable than a one-to-one learning. 2. The practice of adult education must move to more team efforts among colleagues, and full partnerships between learners and teachers. A graduate program should illustrate the operation of these concepts.	***
9. GEOGRAPHY & CULTURES	Adult Education in Scandinavia Adult Education in Canada Adult Education in South America Adult Education in the urban ghetto	1. One can understand his own culture (and his field in relation to that culture) only if he has seen it in contrast to other cultures (and other forms of relating the field to that culture). 2. Adult education in other countries have developed forms, processes, and theories worth borrowing.	*
10. GOVERNMENT CONCERNS AND $'s	ABE Manpower Training	1. Financing government programs and students costs money, so shaping a program to fit government priorities is a small price to pay if it enables you to reach more students. 2. Government priorities are a reflection of the most pressing social problems of the day. Programs based on them will be relevant. 3. Graduates will find a ready job-~~market at least as long as the~~ government priorities remain.	*

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for a Learner Autonomy
11. INSTITUTIONS	Adult education in the community college University Extension Adult education in the Church	1. The history, purposes, procedures, and norms of various adult education institutions vary so significantly and critically that they must be studied separately.	*
12. JOB FUNCTIONS	Teaching in adult education Planning in adult education Administering the adult education institution Consulting in adult education	1. There are a limited number of job functions that adult educators perform. Students easily think in terms of studying and improving their knowledge and skills in each of these areas. 2. A largely different set of skills and knowledge are required to operate each of the different functions.	**
13. PROBLEMS IN SOCIETY	Poverty Alienation Urban crises Peace	1. Adult education must address itself to helping solve the society's most pressing problems and to creating alternative ways of operating a society. 2. Adult education is not now assuming that responsibility and leadership. To refocus the field in a large scale way will require graduate programs that emphasize social problems, how to solve them, and that help create new problem solving approaches.	**

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for a Learner Autonomy
14. PROBLEMS OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY	Self-awareness Marriage relationships Individual learning effectiveness	1. The proper focus of adult education is the individual and enabling him to develop his potential. 2. To be effective, an adult educator must understand the problems of individuals and how to help solve them through education. 3. A graduate program should help students understand problems and create new problem solving approaches.	**
15. PROBLEMS OF THE PROFESSIONAL	How to motivate people How to create change in organizations Meeting the diverse needs of individual students in a given course	1. Most students in our programs come to us with experience and much proficiency in performing their work. 2. They need to focus on finding solutions to the more difficult, unsolved problems in the field. 3. Professors who are leaders in the field are aware of problems in the field that practitioners may not yet recognize. Increasing the consciousness of these problems and helping find solutions to them is an appropriate role for a graduate program.	**

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for Learner Autonomy[a]
16. PROBLEMS OF STUDENTS	Anything they recognize as problems they want to work on	1. The learner is the best qualified person to know what he needs and is ready to learn. 2. Learning is more effective when the learner is trying to solve problems of meaning and significance to him. 3. Adult educators should become continually more self-directing as learners and should understand the process so they can help others. Graduate programs should epitomize this philosophy and give students the opportunity to experience self-direction.	***
17. PROPHETS	The ideas of C. O. Houle[d] The Contribution of Malcolm Knowles The Writings of Roby Kidd	1. The best way to understand a field and to be an effective leader in it is to study and analyze the ideas and work of the most creative and productive minds in that field. 2. The most powerful ideas for the advancement of a field or society most often come from one person of great insight and vision.	*
18. RELATED DISCIPLINES	Sociology of adult education Philosophy of adult education Administration in adult education	1. Adult education is not yet a discipline; it is an applied field drawing on respectable and more fully developed disciplines. 2. Students need help (from the adult education faculty) in selecting and applying the concept, and research findings from other fields.	*

Starting Point	Examples of Courses	Underlying Assumptions	Potential for a Learner Autonomy
19. RESEARCH FINDINGS	Any ERIC-AE category containing 30 or more studies in given year, e.g., Research in adult learning characteristics Research on program planning and administration	1. Activities of the practitioner should be based on research findings. Leaders in the field should be active consumers and producers of research. 2. No course should be taught unless there is sufficient basis for it in "hard data." Convential wisdom, opinions, and personal knowledge are inappropriate to graduate school.	*
20. TIME	Adult education before 1919 Adult education in the Depression Post World War II adult education Contemporary adult education Adult education in the decade ahead	1. Understanding the past is necessary to dealing with the present and anticipating the future. 2. Understanding the evolution of the field and the ways it responds to/leads society is prerequisite to intelligent leadership for the field for the present.	*

FOOTNOTES:

a. Potential for learner autonomy is rated as follows:

* Learner autonomy not inherent in the system, but minimal amounts could be built in.

** Much learner autonomy is possible, minimum amounts inherent.

*** Higher degree or learner autonomy is inherent, essential.

b. Among the studies identifying basic competencies are: Martin Chamberlain, "The Professional Adult Educator," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1969; and George F. Aker, "Criteria for Evaluating Graduate Study in Adult Education," Center for Continuing Education, University of Chicago, n.d. (1963).

c. This notion is here borrowed from elementary educators and refers to the processes of an educated mind - the ways of gathering, evaluating, and acting upon information (both cognitive and affective). See Terry Barton, "What's Left When School's Forgotten," Saturday Review (April 18, 1970), pp. 69 ff.

An illustration of some of the processes of high priority to the adult educator is suggested by James Tackaberry McCay in "Beyond Motivation," The, 5 (May, 1970), pp. 32-33: Innovating: information giving, information displaying, information seeking, analogy proposing, assumption defining, hypothesis proposing, listening, consensus stating, value reminding, vision enlarging (what if?), environment building, model building.

Energizing: directing and holding attention, environment adjusting, body positioning, energy sensing, relation, stress relieving, assistance requesting, recognition giving, confidence projecting.

d. Although we seldom see courses with such titles, we should recognize that this is a starting point for many students who select a given university so they can study under Professor X.

Combining Starting Points

By this point, the reader will have looked at the list of starting points and reflected about those that have been used in programs he has known or is planning. He will also have identified those whose underlying assumptions fit within his own belief system.

How Many Starting Points?

The question remains, however: must a program be made out of just one of these starting points? Or is that singularism an example of the foolish consistency that is the hobgoblin of small minds? Indeed, one is hard put to find an example of a program that has a single, logical, consistent rationale (other than the common practice and the perceived competencies, interests of available faculty, which in fact are not single, logical, or consistent).

My assertion is that a program that grows from no more than two of these starting points (excluding the two listed above) is more likely than is a random hodge-podge, 1) to be a stimulating and productive learning environment, 2) to enable students to become more responsible, self-directing learners more quickly, 3) to produce more competent professionals more quickly who have a clearer concept of the field of adult education, 4) provide the stimulus and means for graduates of the program to continue significant learning, 5) to enable us to explain and sell our programs to our university colleagues and our financing sources, 6) to help a potential student know prior to being admitted just what he is buying into and decide if it is the best program for him. (Also, I should admit to a certain discomfort amid ambiguity.)

Indeed, some of the starting points cannot stand alone. For example, problems of students of necessity have to be expressed in terms of one or more of the others← concepts he doesn't understand, professional problems

he hasn't yet solved, a competence he hasn't mastered, an institutional form he wants to create.

How Combine?

At least two ways to combine starting points come to mind. The first, which should be rejected rather quickly, is to say we will have a list of courses, some of which grow from one starting point, the others of which will grow out of the second. We might thus combine the two starting points of problems of society and concepts from related disciplines by having the following course list: "Poverty and the Adult Educator," "Urban Crisis and Adult Education," "Concepts from Sociology for the Adult Educator," and "Concepts from Anthropology for the Adult Educator."

A more productive way of combining the two starting points would be that of integrating one within the other. Using the two examples given above, we could thus have the areas to be covered in courses be social problems. and within each of the courses, think about those social problems in terms of useful concepts from related disciplines. Thus, in a course titled "Poverty and the Adult Educator" we would focus on relevant concepts from economics, sociology, psychology, or other fields that have something to say to the adult educator in his role in relation to poverty situations in society. This means of integrating starting points is not new,[1] but has been little used in our field. Perhaps the following chart will help crystallize the notion.

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[1] See, for example, conceptual matrixes for integrative teaching and learning developed by Louis Lowy, Leonard Bloksberg, and Herbert Walberg for the Council for Social Work Education, New York City, 1968.

Table 2 - Illustration of Integration of Two Starting Points: Social Problems and Basic Concepts.

Courses (Social Problems)	Concepts from . . .						
	Econ.	History	Soc.	Anthro-pology	Philos-ophy	Pol. Science	Educa-tion
Poverty and the Adult Educator	A,B,C	-	G,H,I	J	K,L	P,Q,R	Z
Urban Crisis and Adult Education	C,D,E	Y	F,G,I	-	S,U,V	M,N,O	W

Another example of the integration of two starting points is shown in the following grid. Note that each competence would take a different form as it is exercised within each of the different courses (job functions).

Table 3 - Illustration of Integration of Two Starting Points: Job Functions and Competencies.

Courses (Job Functions)	Competencies			
	Communicating Effectively	Establishing Conditions for Effective Learning	Being an Effective Group Leader	Being Imaginative in Program Planning
Teaching in AE	✓	✓	✓	-
Planning in AE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Administering the AE Institution	✓	✓	✓	✓
Consulting in AE	✓	✓	?	-

Of course, not all of the starting points can be combined with any one of the others. But it would be fun, and perhaps might generate an exciting new scheme, if we played with all possible combinations - even the most improbable. Ultimately, those that are combined should have compatible underlying assumptions.

Which Starting Points to Select/Combine?

A truism in education, and one which I accept, is that any educational program should take into account four major factors: the student, the teacher and the institution, the society, and the subject matter.[1] If we omit crucial considerations, the resulting program may well be incomplete, skewed and biased, or unsound, and may be a disservice to our learners, our institutions, our field, our society, or ourselves. I have expanded this notion of four factors to be taken into account into sixteen as follows:

Table 4 - Factors to be Taken into Account in Planning an Educational Program.

	IS NOW	FUTURE/ OUGHT TO BE
STUDENT		
- as he sees himself	(1)	(2)
- as others see him	(3)	(4)
TEACHER (& INSTITUTION)		
- role and charter	(5)	(6)
- values /competencies	(7)	(8)
MILIEU		
- general society	(9)	(10)
- role of practitioner and field	(11)	(12)
SUBJECT MATTER		
- concepts/principles/theories	(13)	(14)
- conventional wisdom of field	(15)	(16)

NOTE: The numbers in ( ) are a means of labelling the cells of the grid.

This grid, then, provides a test for each of the starting points. How many of the above cells does each starting point enable us to take into account, and in what weighting of priorities? Which of the starting points can we combine in order to "cover" the largest number of cells in the above grid with the most productive and agreeable weighting?

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[1] Borrowed with thanks from University of Chicago educational philosophers Joseph Schwab and Harold Dunkel.

The astute reader will notice that I have now worked myself into a neat contradiction. Most of the starting points fit rather nicely into one of the cells in the grid. Thus basic concepts equates with cell #13, problems in society equates with cell #9, problems of students equates with cell #1 and/or #2. The contradiction is that I have asserted that the program should grow out of no more than two of the starting points, and now I have said that the resulting program should somehow take into account, or enable us to take into account, all of the cells-- sixteen instead of two!

Solution? Simple. It is a matter of emphasis and focus. The two starting points, and the cells they represent, out of which the program grows, are clearly the ones of greatest importance in the minds of the planners - the ones that give shape and character to the program. The other cells are taken into account in a minor way. Consider the example of the competencies of a given faculty. If this is the starting point, the question is, "What courses do you want to teach?" If faculty competence is a non-starting point being taken into account, the question, "If we organize around concepts, how can we help our faculty make the necessary adjustments to be effective in teaching concepts?" Another illustration: problems of students. If this is our starting point, we do not preplan courses and content; we wait until students arrive and then develop individual and group learning programs and search out the necessary resources. If problems of students is a non-starting point for us, but is something we want to take into account, we go ahead and preplan courses with content and teachers, but we allow students some freedom in course selection and in the specific content and design of each course.

These two illustrations suggest that more should be said about taking into account two of the factors: students and the institution.

Potential for Learner Autonomy
vs. Professional Standards:
Rights and Responsibilities in Learning

This issue was a central one in the previous paper[1] but should be discussed here in relation to the specific starting points. As was indicated in the table on pages 4-10, some of the alternatives lend themselves to a more active student decision-making than do others. It should be noted that a range of learner autonomy is possible within each alternative. The very nature of some of them, however (those rated *) implies a structuring of the world, of knowledge and the field, what has to be learned, that inherently limits the degrees of freedom available to the learner. Those at the other extreme (those ranked ***) can work only if the learner voraciously seizes all opportunity to be autonomous.

The heading given this section implies that learner autonomy and maintaining of professional standards are antithetical. And indeed, much contemporary debate suggests this view is common. I don't intend to resolve the issue here, but do strongly assert that they are compatible and professors of adult education should be smart enough to make, and have faith enough in our students, to make them so. I also feel joy that our field is still open, flexible, and creative enough to permit us (students and professors) to experiment with a variety of learning programs aimed at helping us be effective adult educators.

The point remains, however, that the question of how much autonomy a graduate program affords its learners (and how it prepares them to use it effectively) is probably more important than which starting point is selected for organizing courses. The resolution of this question, as it is practiced, probably can

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[1] Griffin, V. R., "Thinking About a Graduate Program in Adult Education (No. 1): ALTERNATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS," OISE, Department of Adult Education, September 1971.

teach more than any content of courses concerning what adult education can be and what learning is all about. One is reminded of the old adage, "What you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you say."

While rating the potential for learner autonomy for each starting point, I became aware that as the potential for learner autonomy increased, the greater became the difficulty, the risk, the stress, the required subject matter mastery, and the range of competencies, the time and emotional involvement for the professor. Allowing students greater freedom, rights, responsibility, autonomy, is anything but a cop-out.

Non-Philosophical Issues, or
Back to the Nitty-Gritty Real World

In describing the alternative starting points for graduate programs, I have identified only the assumptions underlying each of them. Other factors are important, too, and should at least be mentioned. I have left them to later, however, to offset the tendencies we in adult education have of thinking of these factors first --prior to or in lieu of our assumptions, beliefs, and philosophy. These factors are those things that are prerequisite to operating a program of a given nature. Is your faculty and potential student body able and willing to undertake a high-risk experiment? Will you be able to energize your graduate school administration and university Senate sufficiently about your ideas that they will allow you to experiment-- even with non-course learning programs? Are your faculty able to restructure their thinking? Can you convince the field that your plan is sufficiently sound that administrators will send their best people to you? What resources (numbers of people, competencies of people, time) are needed to "pull off" a given plan? Are those resources available to you? Will people hire your graduates? Will your graduates be effective leaders in the field?

These questions suggest some of the factors you will worry about. There are no guidelines to suggest that starting point #1 requires a faculty student ratio of 1:5, compared with #2 which allows a ratio of 1:25. The only guideline I can suggest is that probably we can accomplish more than we think we can. Many constraints are more imagined than real.

In Conclusion

There is no conclusion; that part is up to you. We have looked at alternatives-- many of them. I've identified some of the assumptions of each, and have hinted at some of the factors necessary to operate them. I have done nothing about anticipating the consequences of each. All that can be done at this point is to conjecture about consequences even given the best of all possible conditions. What follows for you is up to you.

One of the starting points intrigues me -- it is the one I've never seen used in a graduate program -- basic processes. My next step is to explore that one further. If I get my explorations transferred to paper soon enough, perhaps that paper can be #3 in this series.

* * *

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